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HARRY'S  
HELP.

1489

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# HARRY'S HELP.

BY

MRS. S. C. ROCHAT.

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# HARRY'S HELP.

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## CHAPTER I.

### AT HOME.

"**W**HERE'S Harry?" shouted Master James Dean to his baby-sister's nurse, who was tossing the wee girl high in the air at some distance off. He lived in a grand house, with beautiful gardens round it, large old trees, a broad deep lake, and everything calculated to make him happy in his home-life, yet James Dean was not so, therefore he made those around him uncomfortable for him and themselves.

Nurse either did not or would not hear.

"Where's Harry, I say?"

Nurse turned round sharply. "I wonder you're not ashamed, sir, to be shouting that way so close to your mamma's window, and she so poorly. Master Harry's in her room like a kind amiable boy as he is."



Jemmie's voice sank a tone lower as he turned away with, "Oh, he's a regular soft 'un. Ma's own boy, if he had one!"

"That's just why you should be kinder, and less rough to him; not as you are, the rudest, *unfeelingest* boy I ever knew, sir, that you are!"

A whistle was the answer, and Jemmie bounded into the house to get Harry Esbute to play with him. Harry's parents were dead. His mother, Mr. Dean's sister, on her deathbed gave her boy solemnly into his keeping, thenceforth Hatfield Hall had been his home.

Mrs. Dean was kind in her way to him, that is, she thought and intended to make no difference between him and her own son. But the eyes, even of those who being *in* the world are *of* the world, are great tell-tales, and the light and smiles that fell to Harry's share were paler and less frequent than those resting on imperious Jemmie. After all, it was but natural. One was her own, the other but the child of a sister-in-law. One was the natural branch, the other but grafted.

Mr. Dean had always loved his sister dearly, and in *his* eyes her child had a sacredness that made him as tender over him as a man could be. Harry returned his kindness with an affection and open confidence that astonished his aunt, who found him reserved and shy.

Poor little Harry! yet he was happier than his cousin,

who looked upon him as brought up merely to play with, and bear with him in all things: not on the frank equal footing of brother with brother. Harry got on very well notwithstanding; with his uncle's love, and the affection of all beneath him secretly, if not openly, expressed, he managed to go on in his quiet gentle way, subduing the angry frown by a loving smile, while indifferent looks passed over him unheeded.

Hatfield Hall was in Dorsetshire, a few miles from Weymouth. Many's the ride Harry and Jemmie took over the Downs on their rough Shetland ponies, Gipsy and Fay,—one a bright bay, and the other a lovely iron-grey: their big dog, Hector, cantering after his masters, starting and chasing the timid rabbits over the Downs, and across the jagged cliffs to the sea-edge. Such rambles they had! with the fresh breeze blowing not pink, but bright-red roses on their cheeks. The cottage-mothers who saw them returning from their ride, looked after them saying, "Bless their bright faces!" and a fine pair they were. Jemmie, a well formed Herculean sort of boy, with deep olive complexion, large round black eyes, red lips, and a proud bearing, rather too imperious, but manly and brave looking at first sight. Harry, more feminine in beauty, with regular but delicate features, golden-brown hair, and large, earnest, deep-set eyes; his form slight and more graceful than his cousin's. He was so like his

gracious tender mother that Mr. Dean would start at a sudden word or movement of his, and turn away, saying, "Poor Alice! poor Alice!" Was she not happy Alice? No sorrow, no strivings, but perfect rest and happiness in the *knowledge* (not *faith* now) that the way in which her boy would be guided was the way best suited to his character and wants, for that God cares for little children.

Harry's father, an officer in the navy, had met his death bravely rescuing a man from drowning; the man lived, but his preserver died, and this happened a few months before poor Harry's birth, making that event one rather of sorrow than of joy. So his mother when she looked around on her bed of pain and weakness, and beheld a little fragile baby with no father's kiss upon his brow, felt a sinking at the heart and a dread of the life before her, but the love and mercy of her Heavenly FATHER had prepared for her a speedy rest from all her cares in His own blessed Home.

Harry was left to his uncle and aunt; and his cousin, then but three years old, gave the new visitor a very uncertain welcome. Jemmie was not quite sure whether to be glad or sorry, glad of a playmate or sorry for there being now a number two in the house, and therefore the number one having to share favours: but as much as possible Mr. and Mrs. Dean strove to unite them and bring them up with *two bears* for their constant companions, and the names of these two bears were "bear," and "forbear." I wish in-

stead of—at any rate, as well as—the little dogs, and canaries, and white mice, and pigeons, that young people fondle, and feed and care for, they would at once find two pets with these names : and the more you love and cherish them so much the more will your friends and all you seek to please, love and cherish you, so it is worth while trying.

Talking of pets, what numbers Jemmie and Harry had ! There were Gip and Fay, their ponies ; a pet donkey, that had attained the age of three years, and no one had dared put a saddle on, so much had good feeding and kind treatment altered the ordinary character its species bear ; there were rabbits, Angola, lop-ears, every variety almost, stamping their feet and munching parsley. In the rabbit-hutch also resided some fine guinea-pigs, black and red, white and red, lissom rat-looking ones, and others of a decidedly corpulent tendency. Two black squirrels, sent to Jemmie from America, beautiful creatures, but quite untameable, they had given their keeper more bites in a month than his favourite ferret had in ten, they were certainly only borne with for their glossy black coats and tails, beady bright eyes, and extreme rarity in England. One morning, however, the door was found open and the squirrels fled. Days and days passed, but they were not found, and it was not until months after when a paragraph in a local paper of the next county announced that a wonderfully beautiful squirrel unknown as a native of English woods had been

shot by a poor man, and stuffed, and was now exhibiting for the gratification of those interested in Natural History, that the fate of one of the American strangers was cleared up. There were white mice; two tiny Aden tortoises, with pale yellow and brown backs and delicate ribbed legs. Dogs, from the aristocratic Scotch deerhound, "Bruce," the brace of English greyhounds, and "Hector," the black retriever, down to the half-breds of terriers, bull-dogs, and "ratters." Cats, from the lazy voluptuous Persian beauty who fanned her bushy tail up and down on the crimson satin cushions in the drawing-room, to the long highboned "tabbies" and "tortoiseshells" that roamed at large far and wide over the grounds, to the terror of all small birds, and the water-rats by the lake. Those poor rats had a sad life of it, and often a sadder death,—what with the cats and the terriers and the gardener's pet ferret. And yet to see them on a summer's evening emerge from their holes under shadow of the flags and bulrushes, from their size and general rotundity of form one might imagine that such animals as dogs, and cats, and ferrets, had never come within the vision of their professors of Natural History. There were plenty of snakes about too,—though certainly not pet ones,—in the little wood near the house, where the nut-trees and blackberry bushes clustered beneath the shade of tall firs, beech, and oak-trees, where winding grass paths led from no place to nowhere; where

the delicate mounds of the little shy moles meet you at every third step, and brown and green acorns lay nestling among the soft spongy moss that sinks beneath your tread—there wait silently for a few moments, and soon will come a gentle rustling among the twisted branches of the low nut-trees, and then if you give a hiss between your teeth you will soon become aware of what sort your neighbour is. It will answer you hiss for hiss, and if you persist too long with the duet you may provoke it to rear its head and dart its lightning tongue rather too near your person for comfortable sensations. If you look further you may discover some spot large and round, as of ground pressed down by a weight, generally in a very warm spot, where, if the sun does shine, it is sure to direct its rays the longest,—that is the spot where Mr. or Mrs. Snake takes a doze after dinner or breakfast.

Jemmie and Harry often went to this lovely wood nutting. But it was still more beautiful in spring time, when the ground was one carpet of violets, bluebells, pink and white, wood anemone, and wild flowers of every hue,—where the ferns were just uncurling their pale green fronds, and in the meadows, seen through vistas of the woods, the cowslips and oxlips waved their heads like fields of miniature corn. The little town child has as good an idea of what country pleasures are as if he only knew what trees were like from engravings.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE PIGEONS.

NOT far from Hatfield Hall was a large moor or heath. It was called a heath, but boasted little heather, only a large expanse of grass-covered land with a few cottages sprinkled over it. Poor people lived in these cottages, and often in the summer time gipsies brought their picturesque caravans to rest on the moor, and then there was a general "fortune-telling" among the silly girls and boys about, who believed a poor gipsy could tell that future which only One knows concerning us, and the knowledge of which He has seen fit to withhold from us.

One cottage looked very pretty on the moor : the master had contrived to make flowers grow all about it, and had planted some common trees that quite overshadowed it. In these trees he had placed a dove-cot, and the pretty little birds would whirl and fly round their leafy dwelling, and coo and talk to each other all the long summer days.

Jemmie, in riding across the moor, had caught sight of these birds, and took it into his wilful head that he *must* have a pair *at once*. Whenever Jemmie fancied a thing, he could not wait patiently a day or hour for its possession,

he never rested till he got his wish, and when he had it, he never rested until he got wearied with it, and cared for it no longer. I don't think he would have thought twice about the doves, but riding past he remarked to Harry, "What pretty birds! I'd like a dove-cot." Upon which Harry, who knew his cousin's temperament, said,

"Oh, they are not fit pets for you; what could you do with doves?"

"I say I'd like some, and I'll have some too. I'll get down this moment and make the man sell me them."

I need hardly say his offer was refused by the poor man.

"I'll let you have the first brood we have, sir; we can't part with the old ones till nesting time is over."

"But I want *these*, these *very* ones, I say, and I won't wait!"

"Very sorry, sir, but I'm afraid you must."

Jemmie got very red indeed at the man's quiet firmness, and vaulted into his saddle saying, he'd "have the birds at any price, if only to show the old fellow that a gentleman's wish was law."

Harry felt very uncomfortable, for he saw by Jemmie's face that he was "up to mischief." He hardly spoke a word to Harry during the whole ride. Gip got many an undeserved stroke, and vented her opinions by sundry twitchings of her tail, and sudden elevation of her hind



legs. Harry dared not even hint at his surmises, so the affair passed off, and the day wore on.

About five o'clock the next morning but one, Mr. Dean's door was gently assaulted by Nurse,—she could not sleep that morning, and had therefore risen earlier than usual, and passing Master Jemmie's room, saw the door ajar; wondering at this, she peeped in and saw that his bed was empty, not a sign of Jemmie to be seen; "knickerbockers, jacket, boots, all gone."

Mr. Dean comforted her by saying very likely it was a freak of his, and that he was only taking an extra early ramble, and would be back for breakfast. He waited up however to see and receive the young truant.

In about half an hour footsteps were heard stealing softly up to the house, the door opened, and Jemmie stole like a mouse along the marble-paved hall, up the staircase, and just gained his room, when his papa's voice sounded behind him.

"Where have you been, sir?"

Jemmie hesitated and blushed, "No—no—where, papa. I mean only for a walk."

"Rather unusual for you to walk so early, before any in the house are up," said Mr. Dean, looking doubtfully at his son; "you must have had some motive, Jemmie?"

"Only a walk, I assure you, papa."

This was said so boldly, that Mr. Dean turned back to his room, merely saying, "I hope so, my boy."

He felt if what Jemmie said was true, all well and good, if not, in his present mood, questioning would only make him persist in a falsehood. Time would show.

At breakfast Jemmie appeared very merry and boisterous, too much so, it was evidently put on. No one mentioned his morning ramble. The look of bravado in his eye prevented Harry suggesting a thought even.

Just as breakfast was over, and Mr. Dean sat planning a long ride for himself and the boys to a town some eight miles distant, the servant entered.

"Please, sir, a man wishes to speak to you,—from the moor, sir."

"Show him in," said Mr. Dean; "rather early," he thought, and he took up his newspaper yawning.

Fortunately he did not look at Jemmie, who had grown as red as a full-blown peony, and sat fidgeting most lamentably on his chair. He suddenly became desirous to dissect a piece of bread, not bone by bone, but crumb by crumb, and his fingers twitched nervously. The man was ushered in. To Harry's astonishment and Jemmie's utter confusion, there stood the man of the dove-cot.

"Very sorry to disturb you, sir," he began, bowing respectfully to Mr. and Mrs. Dean.

"Not at all, not at all."

"I hope you won't take it amiss in me, sir, but you're a gentleman who'd deal as fair with a poor man as a rich one."

"Surely," said Mr. Dean, wondering what his "drift" was.

"I think that young gentleman there," (pointing to Jemmie,) "knows what I've come for, sir."

"Jemmie!" burst from both Mr. and Mrs. Dean.

"I don't know his name, sir, but I know my pretty doves that I have fed and kept, and was fond of as children most, are gone, leastways two pair on 'em, and my dog Tinker has tracked the footmarks of the thief—beg pardon, sir, I mean—"

"Go on," said Mr. Dean sternly.

"Tinker, sir, has tracked the footmarks of whatever person or animal took 'em to your house, sir."

Jemmie during this recital had alternately got red and pale, he clenched his little fists one moment as if longing to knock the man down, and then relapsed into shame as he encountered his parents' eyes. His discovered absence in the morning went against him—he could say nothing.

"The night before last, sir, I woke up, and fancied I heard a scrimmage in my dove-cot, rats and cats is plenty about here, sir, so I up with my gun and opened the door, and listened—but all was quiet then, only a little whispering among 'em, sir, as when we settle ourselves

after a little start, sir; so after listening a few moments more, I turned in again to bed, and never thought about it any more. In the morning when the birds flew round the door to be fed by the missus, instead of three pairs, only two comes, and 'chick,' and 'coo,' and call as we might, neither missus nor I could bring a sight of them doves. I was very sorry, sir, for I knew they must have been took in some way,—cats or rats generally leave their track, in feathers or legs behind them, but there was nothing but a rumpling up of the ground under the tree, and a good many leaves scattered about. Well, sir, last night I was off on some business many miles from the heath, and did not get home till two o'clock. I walked round my tree then, and I set a trap close, hoping to catch the thief of a cat or rat if they came near my pets again. I slept very sound, sir, but was woke by Tinker growling and grumbling to himself underneath our bed, and sniffing the air; I knew that was a sign of mischief, so up I got, vowing vengeance against the persevering rascal, whatever or whoever it might be, and opened the door quickly to start him like, when at that moment a weight dropped from the tree, heavier than a cat, sir, and cut away like wind—I after it. It was only dawning, sir, a dull grey light, and my eyes were misty with sleep, so I could only distinguish a boy running before me holding something in his arms, which I knew to be my doves. Tinker yelped

and barked, and the boy and I ran—but there's a difference between eight or nine and sixty, sir—that is, sir, in a matter of legs, and the boy soon got ahead, and I forced to give up the chase. I called Tinker back, resolved as soon as the sun was well up to give him the scent and find out what hanimal stole my birds. I was struck all of a heap, sir, when step by step brought Tinker and me nearer the hall. I'd like to have gone home again, but I thought if it *was* any one here, you'd just see me get my birds back again. Your young gentleman came to me two days ago, asking me to sell 'em,—I luv 'em myself, sir, and couldn't bear to part with them, but I told him if he'd wait, he should have some young 'uns after nesting time. But he's an impatient gentleman, I think," said the man, smiling, "and perhaps he couldn't wait,—if he'll only tell me where my birds are, that's all I want; they're not used to be rumped and ruffled as they's been these two mornings,—ask him, please, sir."

"Where are the birds, James?"

"Please, sir, don't be angry with the young master," pleaded the poor man; "only let him tell me where they are."

Jemmie must have felt thoroughly ashamed at the poor man's forbearance, at all events he stammered out something about "the boat house."

"Show the way, sir," said Mr. Dean sternly to the dis-

comfited culprit, and out Jemmie, Mr. Dean, and "Townsend," the poor man, went silently down the walks to the boat house, just on the margin of the lake. There was a large hamper there in which Jemmie had deposited his stolen goods. When, horror of horrors—strewn on the ground lay the feathers and some mangled remains of the poor little doves.

The cats had been the thieves this time at any rate, but they only followed an instinct implanted in them by God for their means of existence, and we cannot blame them as we do Jemmie, who knew right from wrong. The poor man said not a word, but brushed the sleeve of his fustian jacket quickly across his eyes, as Mr. Dean laying his hand kindly on his shoulder, said,

"You shall not lose by it, my good fellow; I shall not forget that I am in your debt through my son's dishonourable impatience;" and turning to Jemmie, he said sternly, "Go home, sir—you would show your superiority over this poor man, and make him a sacrifice to your whims, instead of which you have acted like a common thief," (here Jemmie winced, and grew hot and red,) "and made your father blush to own you."

Jemmie walked away sobered, and we must hope, repentant; and the poor man as he left Mr. Dean's gates, muttered, "Poor wee things—what will my missis say? she loved them birds."

## CHAPTER III.

## JEMMIE'S BIRTHDAY.

SUMMER and autumn passed away, and a clear frosty morning ushered in Jemmie's birthday. His mamma had issued invitations to several young gentlemen of the neighbourhood to spend the day with him. There were to be grand games of ball; skating on the frozen lake till dinner-time; after which the sisters and parents of the boys were expected to spend the evening, and have a dance in the "large" drawing-room. A violinist and young lady pianist were engaged to play for the young people, and a very pretty sight was anticipated.

The holly, ivy, and mistletoe gracefully festooned across the room, and circled the large family pictures that hung so proudly on the walls. Mary, the housemaid, and Jessie, the lady's maid, had been employed for two whole days in the housekeeper's room fastening the clusters together. It was great fun to them, to say nothing of pretending to hide away all signs of mistletoe from the curious eyes of Mr. Jakes the butler, and Thomas the footman; but I suppose the clear frosty air had sharpened their wits twofold, for they were what Jemmie would call

"too clever by half," and would keep poking their fingers and heads just where they had no business, making the cheeks of Mary and Jessie blush redder than the holly berries.

Altogether, on this particular morning, there was a grand bustle. Cook was busy preparing cakes and sweets for the young people. I think she must have been just a wee bit cross, for I heard the old nurse exclaim, taking hold of her nose, and casting a sly look at Mr. Jakes, "I believe I've got it still,"—but any further observation was stopped by cook asking them politely if "all the other rooms were full, or locked up?" which speech they took as a gentle hint that their absence would be more agreeable to her than their company.

It was very kind of Mrs. Dean allowing all these festivities in honour of Jemmie's birthday, for she was far from well, and to be able to receive the ladies in the evening, would have to lie down all day in her bed-room. But mothers more often than their children imagine sacrifice their own pleasure for theirs, and she knew what delight it would give her girl and boy, and even little Harry seemed to enjoy the thought of a merry dance.

Jemmie was to be master of the ceremonies. He was to have everything his own way, so very bright and proud he looked. Papa had made him a present of a new pair of skates, restricting him only so far that he should



not go on the ice until his young friends came, as he was not over skilful, and did not know well how to choose the safest spots for his lines, circles, and—tumbles. Mamma had given him a bat and ball, also a new saddle for his pony that he had fancied at the saddler's some time before. Katie had made him a large marker for his Bible, an anchor and cross worked in red silk on perforated cardboard, and laid on bright satin ribbon. It looked very grand indeed, and Katie was proud of this her first performance in the "needlewoman line."

Harry had saved up his pocket-money for two months, to buy his cousin a very pretty whip, with ivory top, and lash fined off to a thread. These Jemmie found in his dressing-room when he got up. He must have been in a sound sleep not to have heard the footsteps of his mother, the badly suppressed laughter of Katie and Harry as, after leaving their treasure-gifts on the table, they perceived something rolled up far down under the bedclothes, nothing but a black head, and the smallest bit of a very pink nose to be seen.

After breakfast, Jemmie marched out into the garden, calling to Katie and Harry to accompany him.

"Hector! Hector!" was loudly shouted by all three—but Hector was wandering elsewhere on his own account, so they had to go without him.

Katie was muffled up to keep the cold biting air out.

Jemmie ran and shouted, danced and jumped, so did Harry, until Katie crept to him, and poked her little hands into his, saying, "Me very cold;" after that he walked quite quietly, following his cousin to the lake, and warming Katie's fingers in his warm coat pocket. Jemmie had his new skates tucked under his arm, and the run had brought a high colour to his cheeks, making them glow again. There had been a fortnight's frost until the last two days, which though very cold, were more genial than their predecessors. The gardener had told Jakes it was well the young gentleman's birthday was so near over, for already one part of the lake near the "island" was "shaky" from the partial melting of the ice.

As soon as they reached the lake's margin, to Harry's astonishment, he saw Jemmie calmly putting on his skates.

"You're surely not—"

"Mind your own business," interrupted Jemmie; "I'll do what I choose—it's my birthday."

"But uncle—"

"But uncle," mimicked Jemmie; "go and tell him, do, tell-tale, if you like. Come on, Katie, we'll see who'll run the fastest on the ice."

"No, no, Katie," whispered Harry, imploringly; "you mustn't, indeed. You'll slip and fall—pray don't, dear Katie."

"Are you coming, child?" angrily inquired Jemmie; "just like a girl,—you're a little coward, that's what you are."

"Me no coward, Jemmie," half lisped the child, raising her golden head proudly to her brother's taunting face.

"Yes, you are, if not, come along. Let her go, I say, you little saint, she's *my* sister, and shall do as I tell her; so here goes;" he was fairly launched on the ice, and held out his hand to little Katie.

"Don't pray go, Katie," urged Harry, despairingly; "what will aunt say?"

"How can she see, you stupid? her window looks on the lawn, not on the lake. You're *afraid*, that's what you are," turning to Katie.

"No, me *not*, I'll go wid you."

Harry's loving hand was pushed aside, and Jemmie went off leading his prize triumphantly. Harry stood sorrowful. He felt how angry his uncle would be if he knew that Jemmie had wilfully disobeyed him; and he felt afraid lest Katie should come to harm. All about for some distance was firm, but near the island the ice was less safe, and if Jemmie were to run there for a freak, just to frighten him! He stood irresolute, not knowing what to do. On they ran, Katie every now and then slipping, and only held up by her brother's strong hand. Then there was laughing, and he saw Jemmie whisper some-

thing, and look back to the bank. They seemed merry enough, but Harry could not feel the same. He paced up and down, his small footmarks stamping the frosted grass with a crisp crackling sound. He wished Hector was with him; anything to keep him from looking so fixedly across the white lake, till the glare made his eyes water, and the cold made him tremble.

They had disappeared behind some bushy shrubs on the island; would they never come in sight! what could they be doing? Ah, there they are. Jemmie is lifting her on the ice again, and now a slide—and—both disappear, while a cry rings out on the clear air of childish agony and fright.

On—on sped Harry, shouting, "Hector! Hector!" and the brave dog bounds forward to meet his master, who points panting to the lake. "Save them! save them, good dog!" and on Hector gallops, while Harry gains the house, screaming for human aid. Soon were servants, master, maids, all gathered by the lake, as the brave dog dragged the dripping children out of the treacherous pool.

The poor father hung over the insensible body of his son, chafing his cold limbs, and not knowing which of his children needed him most, so cold and lifeless they appeared. It was a sad procession, bearing Katie and Jemmie back to the house they had left not an hour before in health and happiness.

Poor Harry walked sadly and hopeless, feeling as if *he* had had something to do with the accident, for allowing Katie at any risk to accompany her brother. It was a sad weary time the next two hours, the cries and entreaties of the mother for her children just to open their eyes and look on her. Then came a soft sigh, and Jemmie's eyes opened, only to shut again. The warmth was stealing through his frame, but he was too weak to speak.

Little Katie soon woke from her faint, but she was evidently stricken with fever. There was a fearful wildness in her eyes as she stretched her arms to her mother, saying, "Don't, Jemmie—don't go there! me feel so frightened."

"No, darling, you're all safe—safe in your own little room."

"Kiss me, Jemmie," murmured the soft voice; "me no coward, am I? Poor Harry, he's watching me; don't cry, Harry! I'll soon be back, though de ice is so cold—so cold. Oh, Jemmie, hold me, hold me!" she shrieked, suddenly clinging convulsively to the weeping Harry; "hold me, Jemmie, don't let me go!" then her voice sank to a whisper, "Poor little Katie, me so cold—so cold!"

The doctor stood by, looking at the sick child, while he talked in a low tone to Mr. Dean. The mother held the burning hands, and hung over the golden head that turned

wearily upon the pillow. Harry knelt by the side of the bed, striving hard to gulp down the choking in his throat.

"Katie, Katie, darling," he murmured in her ear.

The little sufferer heard. "Warm me, Harry—me so cold."

The doctor shook his head, for he knew that her hands and head were burning with high fever.

The minutes flew by, but no one spoke again. The clock ticked on the chimney-piece. Nurse smoothed the pillow with one hand, the other wiped away the tears that stole down her brown cheeks. Hector crept noiselessly into the room, and stood wistfully by, "noosing" his head up to his master's hand, but no one noticed him, every eye was on the flushed face of little Katie, every ear waited for a sound, but the clock ticked on, and no one spoke. Then Mr. Dean saw a change come over his little one's face,—and he stole gently to his wife's side, and clasped his arms around her. The eyes opened, the lips parted into a bright smile, and as the weeping mother with a long sad cry fell into her husband's arms, Katie murmured, "Me no cold now, mammy," and "fell asleep."

There she lay on the white draped bed, her golden curls in their disordered tangle shone about her like a "glory." There was sorrow, remorse, and death in the room,—

yet no one spoke; and Harry clung to the dead child uncomforted.

The housekeeper had wisely sent a groom on the swiftest horse to the various places that she knew visitors were expected from, to put them off. It was by this time twelve o'clock, so he had to ride quick enough to reach some distant houses in time to prevent the young people coming to the desolate house of Jemmie Dean.

Poor Jemmie lay in his bed quite conscious, and well cared for, but he dared not inquire after Katie, for he guessed by the sad quiet faces around him that he had no longer any sister. He could not cry,—he could hardly realise that his act of disobedience would leave an everlasting mark of sorrow on his home. He was more to be pitied than Katie, with her cold smiling lips, and baby fingers curled nervelessly together.

They had crossed the round pink arms over her breast; nurse had already laid a spray of ivy round her head like a crown. Very lovely she looked, the little fair child, and a smile seemed to be flitting across her face, as though she was not dead, but sleeping. Yes, Jemmie was more to be pitied than the little dead child.

Presently, Mr. Dean felt he ought to go to him; how could he see him? how speak to him? As he looked on the lifeless form and lightless eyes of his little girl, and then bethought him of the merry child that had bounded

to greet him not three hours before, he sank beside her, and stretching out his arms for very misery, the strong man's heart grew weaker than a child's. I think he prayed—for he arose calmer, and gently kissing the cold lips, walked firmly to the bedside of his erring son.

Jemmie lay rolled up in the bedclothes; nurse had taken her seat at the foot of the bed, and sat staring at the fire that crackled and blazed as though it dared the frost to enter the room it guarded. But nurse was not thinking of the fire, only of her pet she had nursed and cared for, as she lisped her sweet thoughts now three short years. Slowly the tears crept down her hard cheeks, and dropped unchecked on the stuff gown. She was but a poor, low-born woman, yet her heart beat as warm, and ached as sorely as did the lady-mother's, sobbing through jewelled fingers.

Mr. Dean came slowly; he was as loth to speak, as Jemmie to listen, but a first word must be said, and who more tender than a parent? He stood some moments by the bedside quite silent, one might have heard Jemmie's heart beat. Nurse took no notice of one or the other, only stared on at the busy fire.

"Jemmie, your sister is dead. I do not upbraid you, boy, your own heart will be a stern accuser."

Jemmie's eyes brimmed over. "Oh, papa, papa," he almost screamed, "I cannot bear it! I wish I were dead, too. I'd have died—"



"Hush, Jemmie! I know all you would say—but deeds are better than words. Disobedience has been at the root of it all, from which has sprung all this misery."

"Papa, papa," sobbed Jemmie, "I'll never disobey again; oh, if I could bring Katie back, I'd—"

"No promises, my child," groaned the poor father; "only remember that disobedience is not manly, nor foolish daring, courage. Oh, Jemmie! if you were to become all that's great and good, you can never give me back my child."

Not another word was spoken. Nurse took no more notice of them than if they had not been there, and Mr. Dean slowly left the room, closing the door softly behind him. Jemmie sat up in bed gazing at the closed door—he did not sob now, his heart was too full, and his ears rang with the memory of that father's cry,—“You can never give me back my child!”

Three days passed, and they had not yet put Katie in her coffin. She looked so lovely and pure, that when the servants came in to lay her in her last resting-place, they whispered together, and left her yet a little longer on her own bed, like a gathered snowdrop. The room was not darkened, the sunrays that had played upon the frozen lake stole in gently to the dead child's room.

For the first two days after her death Harry had wandered hopelessly in and out of the house—speaking to no

one, and few cared to tease him by questions. He often stole into Jemmie's room and offered to read to him, but before a page was read, the book lay on his lap, and his eyes wandered to the door that separated the room from Katie's. When Jemmie saw that, he never interrupted Harry, he felt too ashamed of his conduct, especially as Harry had not once reproached him. By that sick bed the two boys' hearts beat nearer than they would have done in ten years of joy and merriment.

What a very different ending had been expected to Jemmie's birthday, a day ending in joy, merriment, and affection for all his friends, old and young, around him, thankfulness and gratitude to his Almighty FATHER for having given him another year with every blessing that love and riches could lavish on him—and earnest resolutions that if he had tried a little this year, he would be enabled with God's strengthening love, to try a great deal more the next, to be good, obedient, and loving; but the day ended sadly and in misery to all.

What a sad thing it must be for any little girl or boy to feel, that when their mother and father go to rest at night, they cannot in their prayers say, "I thank Thee for the blessing Thou hast given me in my child." To feel that though every *prayer* is dwelt over, perhaps wept over for their well being, the voice of thanksgiving, the sweetest of all voices in God's ear, cannot be raised for

them. I am sure if you oftener thought on this, you would make your parents' hearts glad, and your own heart much happier.

On Jemmie's recovery everyone seemed to join in the resolution that no mention of that miserable day should be made, but by the very silence Jemmie felt keenly that the blow had struck deep. He missed little Katie, his bright, loving baby-sister, wherever he went, and in a few weeks he matured in his own mind a plan he had long thought of,—one by which he would get away from the sad associations everywhere around him, and at the same time further his greatest wish,—he would go to sea! He got his mother to tell his father of his desire, and it was granted: perhaps more easily than he liked. Every boy wishes to have his fancy gratified, even if it be at the cost of severing ties that one or two in his home hoped never to be severed. The boy would feel aggrieved were his real inclinations for future advancement seriously opposed, but I believe in his *heart* he is not sorry that "father" looks very grave indeed at the thought of his boy leaving home for years, that "mother's" eyes fill with tears whenever the subject is mentioned, and that he gets more kisses and loving looks lavished on him by that romping giddy sister of his than he thought her capable of bestowing on anything but her pet kitten or doll. He likes to feel he will be *missed*, and that his absence will cause a

blank. If you said he wanted to make them unhappy, he would indignantly deny the accusation, and truly so,—it is only a natural feeling, I think, and if not carried to too great an extent, a very amiable one. What is it but *love* that we all long for? The child, the parent, the friend,—is it not *our love that God asks for*? Nothing more,—for all He does for us; and all the CHRIST-GOD does for us proceeds from the love He bears us.

Poor Jemmie! I fear that his father did not look much graver after the announcement than before, and his mother's temporary sadness soon faded in the preparations and business of getting all ready for his outfit. So, in about three months Jemmie bade them all good-bye, sailed for the Pacific, and Harry's was the only young voice left to gladden Hatfield Hall.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### HELPING THE POOR.

“**A**UNT,” said little Harry, as they drove home from church one bright autumn morning, “did you see a little girl sitting in the same seat with Nurse? She was in black, and once or twice I’m sure I saw her crying.”

"Very possibly, Harry, if someone belonging to her is dead."

"Yes, aunt, such a pretty face, and so gentle; I wish I could have her for a sister now little Katie's gone!"

"Fie, Harry! that little common child your sister! you don't know what you're talking about!"

Little Harry drew himself more closely into the corner of the carriage, and looked at his aunt for a long time in silence. He was thinking of the sad pale face of the girl, contrasting it with the fashionable lady beside him, with face to match. One, that held the middle course between sad and pleasant, index of a mind that would neither do a very kind nor a very unkind action: neither hot nor cold, she kept the even tenour of her way, foe to none, and friend to few.

As soon as they arrived at home, and Nurse was returned, Harry did not let her rest until she told him all about the little sad girl.

"Didn't she cry, Nurse?"

"Yes, sir, a deal she cried; I asked her what she cried for, and she said her father had been only a year dead, her mother was dying of consumption, and they had hardly anything left in their cottage, for their few things worth any money were nearly all sold to buy food and pay the rent."

"Poor little girl!" said Harry, very softly, "I feel so sorry!"

"*Don't*, sir, please," said Nurse, very energetically; "what will your Aunt say if she sees you've been crying? she tells me never to talk about anything sad to you, sir, 'cause you 'take on' so."

"What else did the little girl say, Nurse?"

"Nothing, sir."

Nurse took up a book very determinately, so Harry said no more.

He was often lonely now,—Jemmie away,—he missed the teasing even, although before Jemmie left he had been much more considerate, and they had often talked together about the future,—that bright spot in the far landscape of the growing girl and boy, that if ever attained shines with a sobered lustre. Its whites become grey beneath the eye, its bright green, russet coloured; the ground he travelled over in search of it, becomes hallowed by memories, and the voices of those now singing in the summer-land.

Yes, they had often talked about the bright future. What Jemmie would do when he came home a gallant admiral,—what Harry would do when he was a grand bishop. I think they even decided their future residences, friends, how many servants, and what their wives were to be like,—then Harry whispered on the last subject, "she

shall have long gold curls and blue eyes, Jemmie, and I'll call her Katie." But these talks were all over now, and Harry rather lonely. His uncle had asked him what he would like to be, because much of his future success in any profession would depend on the next few years' culture of his mind and thought. Harry gave due consideration to so momentous a subject, and felt a certain inward elation at being asked to decide his future calling.

"Be earnest, be zealous, my boy, in whatever place or station you may be. Remember that nothing is *ungentlemanly*, unless it be wrong, or dishonourable. The profession does not raise the man, but the man the profession."

So Harry, stealing softly his hand into his uncle's, said, "I'd like to be a clergyman."

Mr. Dean's heart was glad that Harry need not thus leave him as Jemmie had been obliged, that his nephew might for some three or four years to come study under his own eye, and then not be very far removed when he must go to college. In the meanwhile Harry was leading a very healthy quiet life,—he was gathering up strength for mind and body against the time he would have to give out, not gather in. He was drinking in the poetry of pure country life—riding over the broad fruitful land, making companionship with the noblest of all animals, the horse and dog,—listening to the voice of nature when the birds

sang on the spring days, and the beautiful busy insects buzzed and flitted through the air. He was drinking it all in, making a storehouse of his heart and mind, that would yield him meat and drink when the days were dull and sunless, in the crowded city of man's life. When worldly cares press heavily, and in our ears sound the monotonous notes of every-day common life,—then, the songs of the early birds rise to our memory, and we listen to them, till we feel almost as pure and fresh of heart as when they sang to us in the sunny days of childhood.

Very bright indeed was Monday morning. The sunbeams danced on the sloping lawns, the birds and insects forgot that there was such a time as winter, and made the air resound with cheerful chirping voices. Harry was eager enough for his morning walk. He was almost too big a boy to walk out with a nurse, but he was fond of Nurse, and Nurse loved him; there was some connecting link in her mind between him and little Katie, so the care and affection she had given her, was bestowed now on Harry. Jemmie had never been her favourite. Hector stood at the hall door, sniffing the air with apparent satisfaction at the prospect of a good gambol on so fine a morning.

“Let me go and see the little girl, Nurse, please, I asked uncle for twopence to buy buns, I thought she might like them for her mother, because buns are so nice, and she's got no money to buy them with.”



"I'll see, sir, but I don't think your aunt would like you to go into the cottage."

They had a pleasant walk into the village: alternate walks and runs, to Hector's great delight. Harry braced himself up for a good run, and drew in, with long deep respirations, the breath of life around him. The pure morning air passed through his lungs, circulated into every part of his body, making it warm, his cheeks rosy, and his whole body invigorated. When little boys and girls are out walking or playing, let them put their whole *will* and *power* into what they are about, then the exercise and free air will refresh and strengthen them. When at lessons or work, let them put the mind to that entirely; they will achieve more in an hour's study with mind, brain, will and desire *concentrated* on what they are about, than in five hours of distracted attention and wandering thoughts. Whatever you have to do, do it *heartily*, and you will do it well, whether it be work, play, or any other occupation, bodily or mental.

Soon they came to a little wooden gate that shut out the five-foot-square bit of ground from the road. The door was ajar; but nurse knocked, for she knew, that however poor persons may be, they are sensitive to all small courtesies, and do not like to be burst in upon unawares more than we do ourselves.

A little pale girl came to the door and let them in. She

seemed very frightened, and explained that "Mother had been so ill on Saturday that she was 'cleaning-up' on Monday instead."

The scrap of carpet called a hearth-rug was rolled up from before the fire. The table and two wooden chairs were in a cluster near the door, the broom lying lazily against them, as though glad of the moment's respite from running to and fro on the cold tiled floor. Only tiled, yet bright and clean it looked; and the little muslin curtain sat stiffly on a large wooden box near the window. It seemed proud of its contrast to the limp, crumpled one whose place it was to take. The little pale girl was evidently an industrious one, striving to make the sick room as pleasant as she could to her poor mother, who lay silent and resigned upon a small truck bedstead in the corner. Nurse motioned Harry to speak to the girl, and approached the bed.

"You seem very ill, Mrs. Linton. Have you been long so?"

The woman's eyes brightened at the sympathising tone. (There is more power often in the *tone* of words than in the words themselves.) "Better than eight months, ma'am; but it will soon be over, I think. I'm weaker every day."

"You've only that one girl, I think?"

"That's all, ma'am, but it's a great all; for she's child,

nurse, and everything that's good to me. It's bad I'd be without her. When my husband died, now a year an' more, it was she kept me up in the sorrow."

"Some one better even than your little girl did that," said Nurse, very gently. "Only He who sends sorrow can soften it."

"Ay, ma'am ; so I'm finding out. It's been a hard journey ; but I pray CHRIST will give me at the end of it more than I ever hoped or thought for when I was young and hearty."

A worn Bible lay near her hand.

"You've been reading, I see."

"Yes, ma'am ; Nelly reads to me very often. She'd be as clever a girl as she is good if I could have left her at school ; but the LORD afflicted me, and I could not bear her out of my sight as long as I could see her. She'll soon be motherless."

Here the tears welled into her eyes as they rested fondly on her child, who stood nervously rolling up one end of her little apron and giving shy glances at the young gentleman.

"What have you been reading ?" said Nurse, wishing to divert her attention.

"About Dathan and Korah, ma'am. I dare say you think it strange I should choose the Old Testament ; but—"

"Not at all, Mrs. Linton; I think it beautiful. *All* Scripture is given for our learning; how can we pour out our affliction, pain, disappointment, joy or gratitude, better than in the words of David, who was a 'man' after God's own heart?"

"Yes, ma'am; but, of course, the other's *Gospel*; so it is; but—I do so love them Jews!"

For many minutes Nurse talked with her, and found out many things she fancied that might be sent her from the Hall. Small things that servants in large households throw away unthinkingly, if gathered up and taken up by kindly hands to the poor sick ones, would prove a blessing they would accept thankfully, and the giver gain more than is given; for the blessing of the poor is like the humble moisture of the earth, which ascends noiselessly in the stillness and veil of night, to fall again in cooling showers when the high-born flowers are dry and drooping.

"Don't cry," said Harry, compassionately; "here's twopence. I wanted to get buns; but Nurse said, you'd rather have the money; but she bought two for me, and here they are!" Out came two buns.

Ellen curtseyed, and thanked him through her tears. "People *are* so kind," she said. "Mother says, 'God will never forsake me;' and somehow or other some one is sure to bring us what we want. I was longing so for some pence to buy a little fruit. We've only apples about

here, and they're hard for her to eat ; and she's so thirsty, and fancies a bit of fruit."

"Will you be all alone?" sighed Harry.

"Yes, sir, except God. Mother says, 'JESUS is always with us, and loves little children;' and she says, 'that she'll wait for me, so that when I go too, I'll see her standing with the beautiful angels, and father with her; and that I must be good and love JESUS, and He will soon send for me; so I try so hard, but sometimes I can't help crying, for my cough is bad, and I think I wake her by it.'"

Meanwhile, Nurse had been talking to the poor woman. She was evidently dying; but her eyes filled with love as every now and then they fell upon her child.

"Oh! she's indeed a blessing from God to me, ma'am. Night and day she's with me, never cross or wearied, and so good. She's more fit than me to go."

Nurse could hardly get Harry away. In the next few days he could think of nothing but his little friend; and of every nice thing given him, he kept a part for the poor sick woman. Once or twice he coaxed Nurse to take him to see how they were getting on.

Ellen evidently did her best to make her mother as easy as she could, and the sweet teachings of the humble "Carpenter's Son" sounded well from the lips of one who tried to follow them in her patient, humble way.

Little Harry came in once when she was reading aloud from her Testament, and, sitting down to listen, the *reality* of life and death seemed for the first time revealed to his young heart. That night he begged Nurse to read to him as Ellen did.

The poor woman's child was unconsciously leading the rich one's son to that God in whose sight all men are equal. All loved Harry; he was so gentle and yielding, but it was his nature. He was not so because it was *right*, but because his temperament encouraged it. Now he was beginning to learn that, even against the inclinations, there is a purer happiness in giving up, and, if giving up at all, doing so cheerfully.

"Who'd like a drive with me?" said Mr. Dean, as the door closed on the groom, to whom he had just given orders.

"Oh, uncle—me," whispered Harry.

"Well, I'm off to the stables now!"

So Harry drove out with his uncle, sat in his aunt's seat, and held the whip as an especial treat: very straight indeed he held it, and very much his wrist ached; but that he would not have confessed. Soon the toy shop appeared in sight.

"Now, my boy! cart, donkey, bat—anything to the amount of five shillings is yours; only don't be long. Here's the money."

"Please, uncle, may I really do what I like with it?"

"Yes; only not too many buns or sweeties, Harry."

"I don't want either to-day, uncle; but may I give it away?"

"To whom?"

"To Ellen Linton, uncle; her mother is dying, and she's very poor!"

"Where do they live, Harry?"

"At the end of the village. I often go and see her; and Nurse says, that 'she's a—deserving object.'"

Mr. Dean laughed. "Well, point me out the place, and I don't mind ascertaining that fact for myself; only mind! either that or the toys; not both."

"Oh, no, uncle."

So the reins were re-taken, the whip stood very straight, and off they started. When they arrived there were groups of poor people talking round the door. They curtsied and touched their caps as Mr. Dean spoke.

"How is Mrs. Linton?"

"Gone, sir! Not ten minutes ago she went off like a lamb; her girl thought she was asleep, but we knew better; and now the child's like to break her heart."

"Any means of burying her?"

"Little or nothing, sir: the child must go to service, and the few things be sold."

"I will settle that," said Mr. Dean; "and here's five

shillings from my little boy for any present need. No, Harry," he said, aside ; "you shall come in two or three days with Nurse ; or Ellen shall go to the house ; but you can do Ellen no good just yet."

Very slowly Mr. Dean drove away ; he did not try to divert Harry's thoughts, for he knew they would do him more good than harm.

Presently Harry spoke. "Uncle, do you ever dream?"  
"Sometimes."

"Do you believe that dreams come true, uncle?"

"That's a difficult question to answer, my boy. Some idle frivolous dreams I believe to be merely the working of a brain only partially at rest during sleep ; others may be sent as warnings or teachings—spiritual natures influencing us under God's guidance and permission. Do you understand me, Harry?"

"I think so, uncle."

"Why did you ask me, Harry? Have you been dreaming?"

"Yes, uncle, last night ; but I did not tell aunt or Nurse, because they laugh at my dreams ; but it was such a beautiful one;" and Harry looked up with an evident desire that his uncle would ask him to tell it.

"What was it, Hal ? let's hear it."

"Well, uncle, the last time I saw Ellen she was reading a chapter out of the Bible to her mother about the widow



putting in her mite ; and it was so pretty, I mean I liked to hear it so much, uncle, that last night, after Nurse had put me to bed, I asked her to read it to me. I must have been very tired, uncle, for I think I fell asleep, and where Nurse sat I saw a beautiful angel standing, and he took me by the hand and led me, oh ! I don't know where ! —over fields and by rivers ; and I did not feel a bit tired, but kept looking at the angel's face. I asked him where he was taking me, and he said '*Home*, where angels live, and where I should live some day.'

"Are you tired, uncle?"

"No, child ; go on."

"Soon I came to such a beautiful place ! Oh, I never saw anything like it ! There were beautiful angels, some with golden hair like Katie's, only far longer and brighter. Some were singing, some talking with each other, and others making wreaths of flowers like what they all wore themselves. My angel pointed them out to me, and said, 'Would you like a crown of flowers ?' and I clapped my hands, and said, 'Give me one : ' then he smiled, and said so gently, 'Not yet, they have not finished yours, but it is begun.' Soon we came near an angel that was plaiting such a lovely crown, and I tried to take it, but the angel said, 'That is Ellen's. When children are born on earth, we make a crown for each ; no flowers or leaves, only a dry branch. As they grow, so should the crowns become

beautiful. Every good thought causes a bright leaf to spring, and for every loving action, we place a flower. When the crowns are full of leaves and flowers, God sends one of us to earth, and we place them on their heads, and they leave kindred and friends, and follow the holy Angel into the Presence of God.' I felt very sad at that, uncle, for Ellen's wreath was getting full of flowers, and they said it was all the care, and patience, and love, she gave her mother. I hid my face, uncle, in my Angel's white dress, for I did not want him to see me cry, but he found it out, and turning to his friend, said, 'Another leaf for Harry's crown.' I was so glad all at once, uncle, for *me* to have a flower crown like Ellen's."

"Any more, Harry?"

"Yes, uncle. As I stood by the Angels, I saw another crown hanging on the arm of a beautiful Spirit. He came towards us, and as he passed us by, he pointed to the wreath, and said, 'It is finished,' and they all looked glad, and whispered to each other, 'She will soon be here.' And now, uncle, Ellen's mother is dead, that must have been her crown, for the Angel whispered, saying to me, 'They leave home, and kindred, and children, and follow the Angel into the Presence of God.' That is all, uncle,—the last I can remember; but I wonder will they be glad in Heaven when my crown is ready! Will you, uncle?"

Mr. Dean looked on his little boy, and thanked God for

the dream, but he could not answer the question, for he did not wish to lose him.

The rest of the drive was spent silently, Harry thinking of Ellen, and planning what he could do for her, now she was left alone.

"May I have her for a sister, uncle? we'd never quarrel, and she'd read to me out of the Bible. When I tell her too what I have seen, she will fret no more, but be striving to get more flowers on her own crown."

"I will do what I can, Harry, we'll consult Aunt and Nurse."

Mrs. Dean said the best thing to stop grief among the lower classes was to give them plenty of work,—she ought to go to service. Nurse suggested that a useful girl like her might be very handy to herself. Mrs. Dean did not like her sad face about the house, and "setting up" the girl, with people taking so much interest in her. "It won't be for long, I expect," thought Nurse, "she'll not be long after her mother." So Mrs. Dean at last gave way to please her husband and little Harry, and Ellen Linton before many days were over, was installed at Hatfield Hall as under nursery-maid.

For a few months she seemed to get stronger, and Nurse thought, "she'd make a brave woman after all;" but as winter came, her cough returned, and after many tears, intreaties and reasonings, Harry was reconciled to

his friend's being sent to the Consumption Hospital in London.

Mr. Dean obtained an order for her as in-patient. There she was tended and cared for till the last. Her crown grew brighter and fuller I suppose, as the year grew old. Time passed on, and Harry growing in stature increased in strength, and moral courage in the right. Ellen's gentle example had strengthened his good aspirations until they grew into actions. When grown to be a man, rich, respected, and beloved for his deeds of charity, he would think as the gratitude of hearts poured out before him, "One more flower to my wreath," waiting prayerfully and hopefully for the touch upon his brow, when he'd "leave home, and kindred and children, and follow the Holy Angel into the Presence of God."

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## CHAPTER V.

### JEMMIE, AND HIS RETURN.

**I** WISH all understood what power they have, however young, of creating happiness. The influence of a good child is healthful. Children are sunbeams even in the darkest weather, there is sunshine in the face of a *good*

child, music in its voice, pure joy in its laughter, sweetness in its innocent kiss ! Of course this only applies to *good* children, I do not like to think of naughty ones ; they convert sweet into bitter, hope into anxiety, love into fear. My reader has not I hope forgotten Jemmie, that careless disobedient boy, who instead of being the joy-bell of his parents' house, brought sorrow within its sanctuary. When it was finally arranged that he should go to sea, it seemed as if the heaviest anxiety Mr. and Mrs. Dean had ever known, was about to be removed from them : and yet he had resolved in his own mind never to return, unless he became more worthy of the love, which seemed to have been thrown away upon his boyhood. He cherished the contemptible feeling that it was "spooney" to confess he had been in the wrong, and was very sorry, and yet it was unaccountable how his heart warmed to Harry, Harry whom he had delighted to torment and undervalue.

I must now tell you that in the dim grey light of the melancholy morning of his departure, he had stolen into his cousin's room, and seated himself on the bed from which Harry had just arisen.

"I am not come, old fellow," he said, "to torment you, to fag or worry you, as I have often done, and I don't ask, or want your pardon. I have been anything but a blessing to my parents, and if they wanted to keep me, I could not stay,—I hate the place ! every thing reminds me of

poor little—well no matter. I am going 'where the stormy waves do blow,' and I may find a midshipman's grave, or I may not. Here, kneel down, old fellow, put your hands in mine, and swear—"

"I will kneel down, Jemmie, and put my hands in yours, and pray that you may soon return and make us all happy, as you can do if you like, but I will not swear."

"Very well," cried the impetuous Jemmie springing up, "I might have known that even at the last moment, you would refuse me the only thing I wanted. I have never had any one to open my heart to; whenever I tried to do so, I was lectured and preached at."

"Oh, cousin! how can you be so unjust? I will promise you what you ask, and you know I never break my word. Dear Jemmie, do not leave in anger with any one. Oh, if you could see into my heart how much rather I would go in your place and brave the sea, if it would make all right for you at home."

"Poor little Harry! Well, I believe what you say," replied Jemmie; "and what I want you is to—to—promise me—that—you will always keep a wreath of milk-white primroses just round the foot of poor sister's grave."

"Then it was you who planted them there!" exclaimed Harry, opening wide his great blue eyes. "And aunt said she could not think who had done it; for they were

Katie's favourite flowers ; and no one knew. Oh, Jemmie, aunt will be so thankful to know *who* planted them !”

“ Which she must *not* know !” exclaimed the unaccountable boy. “ If you ever let it out, Harry, I'll never, *never* forgive you ! I *will not* ! Mother would think I wanted to seem better than I am, or to curry favour with her. It would look spooney.”

“ Oh, Jemmie—dear Jemmie—it would be such a comfort !”

“ I tell you *no*,” persisted Jemmie, fiercely ; “ and if you do not promise to keep my secret, I will go away without bidding you good-bye ; and I won't try to keep right—I won't ! It will be hard enough to do it, I know ; but I mean to have what I never had before—a downright try ! I don't want you ever to say a good word for me. You have no right to do so, old fellow. If you had not been the good little chap you are, I think mother and father would have thought better of me, not that I have deserved it, Harry. But promise to do what I have asked, and to keep my secret.”

Harry promised very reluctantly ; but he *did* promise ; for he could not bear that Jemmie should go away without bidding him good-bye—at the very minute, too, when he loved him better than he had done in all his life before.

“ To think of his planting those primroses,” repeated Harry to himself. “ How it would comfort aunt could she

but know it!" No one can imagine the hope that it gave Harry, when any one cast a stone at Jemmie during his absence, to fall back on the bit of sunshine in his cousin's character.

As months rolled on, Jemmie's mother either gradually forgot the faults of her absent child, or they became softened by that absence; and she loved Harry the more for being always ready to excuse Jemmie's short letters or long silence. The truth was Jemmie had a severe illness about four months after he joined his ship, and that gave him time and loneliness to review his past misconduct and feel bitterly the anxiety and misery he had caused his parents. It would have been such a comfort to them had he but written and said so; but the false pride of which he had so much prevented him, and without knowing whether he would be able to prove his desire to do right—he was ashamed to confess in words his sorrow or his good intentions.

At that time we were constantly having little brushes at sea with our real or supposed enemies. Our jack tars are never contented unless they have a prospect of an engagement of some kind; it may be one thing, or it may be another; but as soon as Jack's afloat he wants to prove the dominion of the Union Jack. Whatever the "land lubbers" may think or do, 'Jack blue-jacket' is resolved to prove that, whether it be straight, or whether it be



crooked, "Britannia rules the waves!" No fellow entered upon a sea-life with more "pluck" than Jemmie; and whenever he was mast-headed he formed resolutions of the most admirable kind. He had visions of the most brilliant nature as to what he would dare and do. He saw such happiness in his mother's eyes; he even fancied what his father would say when his (Captain, the gallant Captain Dean's) health was drunk with three times three, and one cheer more. He pictured to himself how bright and grave Harry would look—Harry, a parson in a black coat! Then his happy visions would float away, and poor little Katie's pale face rise before him; and he would determine that this should be the last, the very last time he was mast-headed. Alas! for determinations that lack the strength of perseverance. Still Jemmie was gaining ground. He was no longer selfish and exacting; the ship-discipline was doing its good work; and, as I have said, I do not think he would have disgraced the service; but before he could carry out fully his proposed amendments, his career was cut short by an accident. His was not always pluck of the right kind; he was not morally brave; he found it hard to bear the jeering and rough play of the sea-boys; he was not popular at his mess. At first he tried to shirk his work. He did this so often on the plea of illness that, when he was really so, his sickness was called "sham;" still, he kept

his determination, though, poor boy, he often "salted his pillow" with genuine tears.

He got better somehow, and when he crept out of his hammock, he was improved in mind more than in body. This was his first illness. On his recovery, he longed to distinguish himself in an engagement, and if only his mishap had occurred in one, and he had obtained the least bit of "glory" by it, he would have been happy, but an unlucky spar struck him in the leg as he was crossing the deck, and the young active boy in less than a moment was rendered lame and suffering for ever.

The fracture was so severe, that for some time the surgeons feared that the loss of his life would follow the loss of his leg, and the news of this sorrow arrived at Hatfield Hall when his father was laid up with low fever. The ship was homeward bound, and Jemmie's mother was tortured with anxiety for both husband and child. She could not leave Mr. Dean's bedside, much as she desired to await the arrival of the ship at Portsmouth, but Harry, dear, kind Harry, was among the first who boarded the "Satellite," when she anchored in calm water.

You must imagine the meeting, the interchange of words,—the shamefaced haste with which tears were wiped away, and the exclamations on one side of "dear old Jem, only let me get you home, old fellow, and you'll soon be all right."

"Ay, ay, pretty right it will be," replied Jemmie, "one of my precious legs in the shark's mouth, and this poor craft only fit to lay by in dry dock and undergo thorough repair; the fellows have made all ready for me to be slung ashore at once, for I knew some one would meet me. I never thought the governor could be ill, but fancied I should have seen him, or mother." His poor pinched face was distorted by emotion, but he soon got it straight again, and it was so pleasant to see that Jem's sufferings had effaced from the "log" of the ship's company all his offences and short-comings.

The joyous greetings of "sweethearts and wives," did not prevent the jolly Jacks from paying every little attention to the poor suffering boy, who had not yet realized what it was to remain *unlike* others to the day of his death. They thrust keepsakes upon him, and grasped his hands, and gave him such a cheer, and when he was fairly in the boat that was to row him ashore, he called out, "Holloa, Mark, where's old croak?"

There was an universal shout for "old croak," and presently, enclosed in a strong cabbage net, "old croak" fluttering, screaming, and I regret to say, using a very wicked sentence, was let down in the boat by a long rope. It was according to its voice, a parrot, but being nearly covered with tar, and half its feathers pulled out, doubtless to prevent its escape, it would have been diffi-

cult (had it held its tongue,) to know whether it was a beast or a bird.

"It's a beauty, Harry," said Jem, "when it's in its own toggery. Don't look distressed about it. I know they can't bear parrots at home, but I did not get it for them."

A deep crimson flushed the poor fellow's cheeks, and settled in two large patches under his eyes. "You remember the doves, Harry? well, I thought I'd bring the old fellow a parrot, to make up for *that* you know. I hope he's alive and well, he is fond of queer creatures, and—well, no matter, 'Croak' will amuse him, I know."

"Jem, you are a brick," exclaimed Harry, "I knew you'd be a blessing at the Hall, ever since *that* morning, Jemmie, about the primroses."

Harry thrust his hand into his bosom, and drew forth several primroses, faded but fragrant: "I suppose," he added, while Jemmie bent his head over them, "I suppose I may tell Aunt, now."

We will leave them all at Hatfield Hall, happy as they were now, indeed happy always, though poor Jem was what the old man on the moor called a "twisty young gentleman," (and by the way, "old croak" was so clever, that dozens of people used to go to the cottage to hear the wonderful bird talk) yet his "twists" became more and more

in the right direction ; and as to Harry, late and early among his people, bearing and forbearing, loving and beloved ; to the glad and gifted, he was the earnest sympathiser ; and to the weary and faint-hearted, he became as "sunshine in a shady place."

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